

## **Brandon Villapando**

My name is Brandon and I interned with the City Manager's Economic Development office. I stumbled upon this opportunity without truly knowing what to expect, but after taking advantage of the opportunity, I discovered that this internship was more than I could have imagined. This internship has ranged from meeting the City Council and the City Manager, to attending staff meetings, gaining firsthand knowledge of city projects, and even meeting some local business leaders. It's been a chance to gain a personal experience interacting with the men and women who do the business of the City. It's inspiring to see just how focused and flexible everyone has to be to manage a city of this size.

Even as a lifelong resident, I had, at best, a vague idea of how the city operates. Having the chance to get a front row seat of our public servants has certainly made me consider public service as a career choice. Fran Fulton, the Economic Development Office manager, and Domenica Megerdichian, the office's staff assistant, have introduced me to the various managers and departments that make this city operational. Their hard work and willingness to put the community first has exceeded every expectation I ever had.

I currently study economics and political science at California State University Long Beach where I plan to graduate in 2014. Following my graduation, I hope to build on my experiences with the City of Torrance. I don't know if I will end up working for a city government, but I can be certain that this internship in the City Manager's office has forever changed my perspective on serving the public. It has made me think twice about the role of our local government and what it takes to be successful meeting the diverse needs of the public.

Although I have only spent a quick 6 weeks here in the City Manager's office, I have already learned more than I thought I would have. I would even go as far as to say that this job has been the most insightful and rewarding job I've ever had. I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the City of Torrance for allowing me this behind-the-scene look at our local government.